

Sisk, Richard

From: Chergo, Jennifer
Sent: Monday, December 15, 2014 2:58 PM
To: fonda.apostolopoulos@state.co.us; robbins.jennifer@state.co.us;
jeannine.natterman@state.co.us; Farrell, Lisa - Environmental Health;
judy.montero@denvergov.org; nola.miguel@denvergov.org; albus.brooks@denvergov.org;
chy.montoya@denvergov.org; jennifer.clanahan@mail.house.gov; Wendy Hawthorne;
cynthia@focuspoints.org
Cc: Schmittiel, Paula; Sisk, Richard
Subject: VB/I-70 Update

Greetings. With 2014 coming to a close, we wanted to send a quick update to you regarding the residential portion of the Vasquez Boulevard & Interstate 70 (VB/I-70) Superfund Site, operable unit 1 (OU1). As you will recall, in 2012, EPA, working closely with the state of Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) and the city and county of Denver Department of Environmental Health (DDEH), renewed our efforts to gain access to sample or clean up approximately 180 properties within the VB/I-70 Superfund Site boundaries. Lead and arsenic were present or were possibly present in soils at those properties at levels above EPA cleanup levels. This posed a possible health risk to residents living there now and to those who might live there in the future. We attempted to connect directly with the property owners via many different ways. We mailed letters; hosted a local informational session; and conducted or supported numerous door-to-door efforts. We could not have done all of this without the advice and assistance offered from all of you, including Councilpersons Montero and Brooks' offices, representatives from Groundwork Denver and Focus Points Family Resource Center, and a number of local residents.

In the end, all of these efforts made a difference. In 2013 and 2014, EPA was successful at obtaining access to sample ~105 properties and clean up the 24 properties that required cleanup. Still, approximately 50 properties remain where EPA could not obtain access to either sample or cleanup. In July of this year, EPA recorded a Notice of Environmental Conditions in the property files of these properties at the city and county of Denver Clerk and Recorder's Office. These notices are informational only, meaning they do not restrict use of, or activity at, the property in any way. The purpose of these notices is to inform future potential buyers of these properties that there is known or potential contamination in the yard soils. In addition, a letter will be mailed to residents as well as to the owner of record at each of the 50 properties annually that informs them of the known or potential contamination there. These measures serve to inform and better protect current residents, including tenants, and potential buyers of these properties.

At this moment, ninety nine percent of the more than 4,500 residential properties located within VB/I-70 OU1 have been sampled and/or cleaned up. Residents can play, work, garden, or spend time in their yards just as they would anywhere else. EPA is no longer concerned about lead and arsenic in the yard soils because we have sampled the yards and cleaned them up where necessary. For those remaining 50 properties, protective, informational measures are now in place as described above (notice of environmental conditions and annual letter).

In September of this year, EPA finalized an Explanation of Significant Differences (ESD) to the 2003 Record of Decision for VB/I-70 OU1. Essentially, this document describes the informational measures put in place for the 50 remaining properties (notice and letter). Also in September of this year, EPA finalized the second Five-year Review Report for the VB/I-70 site. The report concluded that the OU1 remedy is protective of human health and the environment at all properties within OU1 because the vast majority of yards have been sampled and, where necessary, cleaned up, and there are now informational measures in place for the remaining 50 (notice and letter). Both the ESD and the 5YR are on our Website at: <http://www2.epa.gov/region8/vasquez-boulevard-i-70>. A display ad appeared today in the Denver Post announcing the availability of both documents to the public.

Again, we appreciate all of your interest and participation in this effort. We are ever closer to completing work at Operable Unit 1 - the residential portion of the VB/I-70 site - and toward deleting it from the Superfund National Priorities List. In 2015, we will continue working with the CDPHE, DDEH, and many of you to continue our environmental

investigations at the non-residential portions of the VB/I-70 site – the former Omaha & Grant and Argo smelter sites – operable units 2 and 3, respectively.

If you have questions or would like to discuss further anything regarding the VB/I-70 Superfund Site, please feel free to contact either myself or the EPA VB/I-70 project manager, Paula Schmitt diel, 303-312-6861, schmittdiel.paula@epa.gov.

Have a wonderful holiday season,

-jc

Jennifer Chergo

Office of Communication and Public Involvement
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 8
1595 Wynkoop Street
Denver, CO 80202
1 (800) 227-8917 / (303) 312-6601